

# Indiana House of Representatives

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## News and Information

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### **BROWN ENDORSES LEGISLATIVE MOVE TO END BMV BRANCH-CLOSING DICTATES**

INDIANAPOLIS – Citing the failure of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) to adhere to the spirit of current laws requiring public hearings before the closure of any license branch, Rep. Charlie Brown (D-Gary) said today he will join others in calling for legislation that will make the agency more responsive to the general public.

"I will be working to amend legislation during the 2006 legislative session that will require the BMV to publish the details of any future decisions to close a license branch," Brown explained. "My legislation will force the BMV to present these written details to the state legislators in the districts impacted as well as to those representing the local units of government served by the branch."

Brown's announcement follows the conclusion of work by a legislative interim study committee he says he had hoped would undertake a more thorough investigation into the decision-making processes at the highest levels of management within the agency.

"In the course of the past few months, it has grown painfully evident that the current laws requiring public hearings before the closure of a license branch were viewed as a mere nuisance by BMV Commissioner Joel Silverman," Brown said.

"It seems several high-ranking BMV officials were just going through the motions," he added. "My legislation will force these state officials to justify their actions to citizens and taxpayers who are required to use license branch services, particularly now that photo identification will be required in the voting process."

"What went on this past summer was a travesty," Brown continued. "One license branch closing after another was announced, all without taking into account the testimony of citizens who in many cases risked their own health in order to make their voices heard. Republicans and Democrats alike were rightfully outraged at the arrogance displayed by Commissioner Silverman and other BMV officials."

"It was only when busloads of citizens from the Gary area made the trip to the Statehouse in Indianapolis that anyone in the governor's office seemed to respond to our pleas to keep the doors of the Gary license branch open. And even then, there was utter confusion about a proposal to form a partnership between state and local units of government in order to maintain a basic minimum level of license branch services for our community."

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